



Cemetery Commission Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: Thursday, November 15, 2018, 4:30 pm

Commissioners Present: Rita Church, Lainey Rappaport, Francis (Tag) Taginski, Emma Swift, Mellisa Cain

Staff Present: Holli Bushnell - Office Assistant, Cindi Wight – BPRW Director

Mtg. was called to order at 4:28pm by Taginski

I. Approval of Agenda

Lainey Rappaport moves, Rita Church seconds.

II. Approval of Minutes from September 20th Meeting

Emma Swift moves, Rappaport seconds.

III. Old Business

A. Lakeview fence repair/replacement

Cindi Wight reports that the original fence company, Stewart Fence (sp?), has won the bid to handle the fence repair assessment. The date of the assessment is TBD. Wight has instructed them that, when it comes to fence repair, safety is the priority and damaged or dangerous sections should be repaired first. Their assessment will also include long term planning both in terms of the repair work timeline and in terms of future upkeep. There is a question as to whether or not the rebar supports are historic or if they can be removed to simplify grounds care around the fence. There is the possibility that, with modern installation techniques aspects of the fence may be changed to make care easier and to make the fence itself more durable. This estimate is required to move forward, so BPRW can properly budget for the project in the years to come. The project will ultimately require at least three bids before we will be able to start work.

B. Section 6 Update

The question as to whether or not the development of this area is considered a “new” project remains. There is the possibility that parks will be able to use some of the money set aside for the fence repairs for the survey and layout of section 6. We are currently using \$3,000 of the \$75,000 for the fence survey, the rest remains available. This is the only money currently budgeted for projects at the cemetery. However, if it is considered a new project it must be graded against all other projects. Wight is working to find out if the money allocated towards fence repair can be used for section 6. If not, there is the possibility that work on this section can be included in one of the budget plans for FY2020. Wight reports that the projected cost for work in this section is \$10,000 for the planning and surveying alone. Should we chose to pin the section at the same time the total cost would



be \$25,000. Francis Taginski commented that he has a document detailing the original projected costs and outline for section 6. He will forward that document.

C. Lakeview office building repair update

There is no update for the repair of the office building. Wight reports that Martha Keenan from DPW is looking into options for our next step.

D. WWI Celebration Recap

Church reports that, with the fabulous weather the weekend of 10/20, the turnout for the event was high. There were many visitors, not just from Burlington and Chittenden County, but from the renowned Hope Cemetery in Maine and even as far away as Ireland! The introductory speech was given by Diana Carlisle, the current Friends of Lakeview president. The tour was conducted by David Lightbody, a UVM professor of Egyptology with a personal passion for WWI, with tremendous assistance from Perseveration Burlington. Costumed reenactors presented pertinent stories of 10 individuals buried here at Lakeview who had a direct connection to WWI. Two tables were borrowed from the Lakeview office and were used to display artifacts. Items were loaned both from local individuals and from the collection of WWI artifacts at UVM. The tour received great publicity and was generally well received. Many of the participants expressed interest in a WWII tour in the future. Generally speaking the Friends are thrilled with the success of this tour. Church extended their gratitude to the commission for all the support they provided for the tour.

E. Planning/Zoning Letter Update

There is no update to the Planning and Zoning letter. Jeff Shedd has completed an estimate for the number of graves available, and Meagan Tuttle, principal planner for P&Z, will add this new information to the letter and it will factor into future decisions. Wight encouraged commission members to attend a future Plan BTV meeting and speak to the importance of cemetery issues.

F. Perpetual Care Fund Update

There is no update on the Perpetual Care Fund.

G. Endowment Fund/Capital Campaign Discussion

Wight informed the commission that a project (or several projects) are necessary if they choose to pursue a fundraising campaign. She suggested that the commission team up with the Friends of Lakeview to focus on specific projects (i.e. repairs to buildings, stone righting and repairs, etc...). Once specific projects are identified, proposals can be made to the parks foundation and run through the mayor's office. A capital campaign without a specific purpose is not a viable option. Possible projects were discussed later when Holli Bushnell provided her office assistant report.

IV. New Business

A. Recent Free Press and Seven Days Cemetery Articles

Taginski shared copies of the two articles, one from the Burlington Free Press and the other from Seven Days. The Seven Days article focused on green burial and may have an impact in future requests. The Free Press article was written by David Lightbody and explores the



history of Lakeview in connection to WWI. A copy of this article is being kept for posterity in the Lakeview office.

V. Superintendent and Office Assistant Report

Bushnell reports that, after discussing the cemetery budget with Wight, she has been brainstorming several ideas for the future of all three city cemeteries. Her ideas are as follows:

1. Use the GPS mapping system currently owned by the city (and used to track trees on city property) to map all three city cemeteries. This would be extremely beneficial to both staff and patrons. Her hope is to learn the system herself, enlist volunteers, and use it to not only map historic burials but to pinpoint the location of future burials as well. This will drastically simplify the ability for visitors to find graves. Additionally, it will make future burials easier as the location of urns will be mapped to the exact GPS coordinates.
2. Run tours in the summer for visitors. There are 4 different tour programs (Civil War, WWI, Famous Women, and Trees) that could be adapted and performed by Bushnell. This could possibly generate revenue as well as encourage interest in and use of the cemeteries.
3. Create summer programming for children. Bushnell would like to develop 2 different summer programs, one for younger kids (5th-8th grade) and one for older (high school). These programs would focus on historical research and preservation with different levels of depth depending on the age of the children.
4. Partner with Fletcher Free Library to hold “scary story time” at Lakeview (or possibly Elmwood as it’s closer to the city center). Also, develop a young writers group for kids interested in horror and fantasy writing (or maybe even historical fiction and non-fiction).
5. Develop a concert series at Louisa Howard Chapel showcasing local folk music groups, classical chamber groups, and singer/songwriters.

The commission and Wight response was overwhelmingly positive in regards to these ideas. Wight suggested that Bushnell put together a list of the different kinds of programming she would like to do here. These ideas are perfect for fundraising campaigns and should be included. Grant money could be sought to assist in getting these plans off the ground.

In terms of the tours, Bushnell was cautioned that Preservation Burlington frequently runs tours in the summer. She should work with them to ensure she doesn’t step on any toes. Bushnell agreed that this was a good idea.

VI. Parks Director Items

All Parks Director items were discussed in the old business.

VII. Commissioner Items

Rappaport reports that the road at Greenmount is impassible and requires fill. Wight and Bushnell made note of this and will inform the pertinent individuals. Rappaport was also concerned that signage still has not been posted at any of the city cemeteries. Wight will get exact date for the signage and report back. Finally, Rappaport stated her concerns that there is no trash receptacle at Greenmount. Wight suggested that a request be made through Facilities Dude. Bushnell will do so.



Church made the request that Taginski attend a future Friends of Lakeview meeting after the New Year. Taginski agreed that this was a good idea. The exact date for the next Friends meeting remains TBD, but Taginski intends to attend.

VIII. Public Comments

No public comments were made at this time.

IX. Adjournment

Taginski informed the commission that, as there are no immediately pressing issues, he will email possible dates for the next meeting after the holidays. It is tentatively set for some time in February.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:51pm.